

## HOMELESSNESS IN NICEVILLE



### **Confidential Instructions for the Director of Governor's Task Force on Homelessness**

The governor's Task Force on Homelessness directs the state's homeless initiatives. It partially funds the Third Avenue Service Center and coordinates homeless initiatives and projects throughout the state. The governor is very concerned about the publicity Niceville has been getting concerning its homeless problem. The Task Force was created to take a proactive stance on homeless issues and avoid the type of negative publicity generated by the newspaper poll. The governor is especially concerned because she is currently negotiating a deal to open a textile manufacturing plant near Niceville. Your job is to take a lead role in the solution to Niceville's homeless problem without compromising the governor's other interests.

As a longtime homeless advocate, your professional opinion is that the Ledbetter Foundation's funds should be used for outreach, mental health, physical health, and substance abuse programs. Increasing the number of shelter beds does not address the long term goal of getting people off the street. Such Long-term programs should be the priority. Job training and self-sufficiency programs can counteract the projected growth of the homeless population. The food service training program is an excellent idea, but it should not be administered by the Third Avenue Service Center. You are very concerned about what happens when foundation money runs out. You do not want the State to have to assume responsibility to continue funding a project started by the Foundation. However, the Task Force has \$250,000 per year to support a new project. The money must be used for job training or other service delivery; it cannot be used for a new shelter or increasing capacity at the Service Center.

The Task Force projects a 10 percent rise in the homeless population in the next year. This estimate comes from a joint Task Force and Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development study. You will reluctantly back an expansion of beds only if the expansion is less than twenty beds and the beds are located at the existing shelter.

The politics of the situation are also of deep concern to the governor. Whatever is done cannot be at the expense of business or the neighborhood. The governor has specifically instructed you to try and appease the Homeowners Association, but you know from past experience that the Homeless Union is capable of generating enormous negative publicity. The governor feels that moving the Union's Food Service from Straley Park is a priority. You must help find a way of accomplishing this without angering the Homeless Union.

The fact is that the Homeless Union has been a political nightmare for the governor's office. The union has a long history of protesting at City Council meetings and going to the press with accounts of government failure. Indeed, it was one of the main reasons for the creation of the Task Force. You are wary of the union's fiscal and professional accountability in actually running projects. You also do not agree with the union's use of strict discipline. You worry about how the union uses its power over its members.